



# Munich message

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**THE WORST THING** you can call a Eugene track and field fan is provincial. Or unsophisticated.

But at the risk of treading on that tender territory, it seems entirely worthwhile pointing out that Steve Prefontaine doesn't already have the Olympic gold medal in his Glenwood trailer park.

Pre is good. Unquestionably, he is the best in the United States. He may be the best in the world.

His performance in the Olympic Trials certainly gave that indication. And his American record 13:22.8 for 5,000 meters was only one of an impressive string of 1972 achievements.

Like a collegiate record 27:22.3 six-mile in March, a 3:56.7 Twilight Mile, a 3:39.8 for 1,500 meters against Oregon State, and an NCAA 5,000-meter championship.

And, following his domination of Olympic veteran George Young in the trials, Pre said he can run 10 seconds faster in Munich.

He may have to.

Pre knows his competition, but many of the American track and field fans don't.

The little blurb about Dave Bedford's 13:17.2 clocking in the 5,000 and 27:52.8 in the 10,000—both best in the world this year—raised more than a few eyebrows.

Bedford, a bearded Englishman, ranked no better than third in the 1971 world rankings behind Juha Vaatainen of Finland and Jean Wadoux of France. Also in that top 10 were, in order, Kip Keino of Kenya, Tony Benson of Australia, Harald Norpoth of West Germany, Dane Korica of Yugoslavia, Javier Alvarez of Spain, Emiel Puttemans of Belgium and Prefontaine.

**PRE DIDN'T LOSE** a 5,000 last year, and his time was bettered only by Bedford, Keino, Alvarez, and Puttemans. Still, he hadn't faced the Europeans and Track and Field News saw fit to rank him No. 10 of 10.

Pre talks mostly of Vaatainen, Norpoth and Puttemans when he mentions his opposition.

And, yet, the top times this year other than Bedford's 13:17.2 and Pre's 13:22.8 belong to Frank Eisenberg (13:29.0), Jurgen Haase (13:29.4) and Bernd Diessner (13:32.0) of East Germany, Ian McCafferty (13:33.0) of Great Britain, and Rashid Sharafyedinov (13:33.6) of the Soviet Union.

So the world is full of good 5,000-meter runners. Whether there are any who can race through a final 4:08 mile like Pre did here in the trials is something else again.

Vaatainen carries a certain mystique after winning both the 5,000 and 10,000 at last year's European championships, the latter with a 53.8 final lap. The Finn, in fact, has amazing speed with sprint bests of 10.9 (100 meters), 22.1 (200) and 48.9 (400). He also has run 1:48.4 for 800 meters.

"I will win the 10,000 meters at Munich," he said. He also indicated he might try the marathon, which means he might not go in the 5,000.



**PREFONTAINE**

**ANY ANALYSIS OF** the 5,000 at this point is of questionable value because of uncertain entries. And who can predict what unknown African will bolt from the pack. Naftali Temu wasn't unknown in 1968, but he wasn't exactly the people's choice to win the 10,000 meters either.

Ekkehard zur Megede, a West German track authority who covered the U.S trials here, predicts that Kenya's Ben Jipcho will win the 5,000 as well as the 3,000-meter steeplechase, an event in which he won the silver medal at Mexico City.

Zur Megede said America will "probably win 10 and possibly 12 gold medals in Munich."

He thinks Dave Wottle will handle Russia's Yevgeniy Arzhanov in the 800, picks American victories in the 400 meters, both hurdles races, both relays, the pole vault, long jump, shot put and decathlon.

"You could also win the 200 with Larry Black, the 1,500 with Jim Ryun and the 5,000 with Steve Prefontaine," he said.

**WHILE HE MENTIONS** Ryun as a possibility, the German is going with Kip Keino, the defending champion, at 1,500 meters.

"I think Keino will run a world record race," he said. "I'm not sure Ryun is ready."

In the sprints, he picks Russia's Valeriy Borzov in the 100 and either Borzov or Italy's Pietro Mennea in the 200.

But there was an argument from Young, the three-time Olympian.

There's no doubt Ryun's going to win it," said Young. "I think he would win the 800, too, if they let him in, which I think they should."

The 5,000?

"Prefontaine and I are going for one-two, not necessarily in that order."